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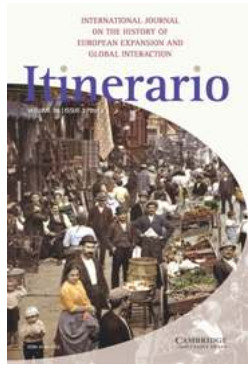

Europe and The Wider World Markus Vink. Mission to Madurai: Dutch Embassies to the Nayaka Court of Madurai in the Seventeenth Century. *Dutch Sources on Southeast Asia vol. 4*. New Delhi: Manohar, 2012. 648 pp., illus. ISBN 978-81-7304-931-6. \$149.75.

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Markus Vink. *Mission to Madurai: Dutch Embassies to the Nayaka Court of Madurai in the Seventeenth Century*. Dutch Sources on Southeast Asia vol. 4. New Delhi: Manohar, 2012. 648 pp., illus. ISBN 978-81-7304-931-6. $149.75.

Skyrocketing printing costs have caused publishers to impose limitations on book length that have made it difficult to get long works published, much less a specialised primary source collections. The heyday of primary source publication was probably over a hundred years ago when people like Frederick C. Danvers edited several large collections such as *The Portuguese in India* in two large volumes in 1894 and *Letters Received by the East India* Company published in six volumes in 1896. Certainly these types of publications still appear, like the Deshima Dagregisters project in Leiden, but they are few and far between. For this reason alone, the series, *Dutch Sources on South Asia c. 1600-1825,* is a welcome addition to scholarly literature. Perhaps more importantly, however, except for by a comparatively small group of specialists, Dutch sources are rather underutilised in the study of early modern South Asia and these volumes will be invaluable in reinserting the role of the Netherlands into this historical narrative. The first three volumes "offer detailed research guides to archival collections as well as other published and unpublished materials" (colophon). *Mission to Madurai* is Volume Four of the series, the first of promised future volumes to present primary sources, as well as the first volume of a projected three volume set on Tamil-Nadu in the Dutch period to be produced by Vink.

This fairly massive book is really two books in one—a lengthy essay (128 pages), called the "Introduction", and journals, instructions, and letters of Dutch East India Company Servants on official missions to Madurai, both transcribed in the original Dutch and translated into English. Madurai was the location of the court the Nayaka and is still the administrative capital in what is now the Tami-Nadu state in southeastern India. It was a major textile centre in the VOC empire. The essay, "Images and Ideologies of Dutch South Asian Contact", utilises the primary source documents in this volume as well as many other Dutch sources along with secondary sources to examine the contact between aithochrous people and Company Servants in roughly what is Tamil-Nadu today. This essay covers the broad chronological span of the series title and examines ideas and interactions of the various Dutch factions in Asia—from religious leaders to soldiers. It is a fairly loosely constructed argument about the transfer of knowledge of the "other" through writing, emphasising, but not exclusively from, the European viewpoint.

The introduction to the primary sources actually occurs in the succinct but useful forward. The documents are more chronologically truncated than the book title or essay would suggest, and all date from the last quarter of the seventeenth century. These transcriptions and translations, like the entire book, are extensively footnoted, so perhaps the author intended these footnotes to serve the function of a more traditional introduction. There are eight sections, one covering Hendrik Van Rheede's Mission to Tiruchirappalli in 1668, four with documents concerning diplomatic efforts and observations of Adolff Bassingh to Madurai and Tiruchappali in 1677, and three on Nicolaes Welter's Mission to Tiruchirappalli in 1689. Two of the documents, one from the Bassingh set and one from the Nicolaes Welter set, are Dutch letters sent from Nayakan officials. The contents of the document sets vary because extent archival sources relating to court journeys are "miscellaneous" (16).

Vink sees these documents as travel literature, and bases his analyses and description on this definition. This is an interesting interpretive approach, but certainly not the only one. These documents were not created as entertainment for the armchair traveller or as proto-ethnographic studies of the other. Rather, they were official reports for the Company and meant to report activities and provide intelligence for future Servants to use in their own commercial transactions and diplomatic endeavours. Vink does not hold back on his judgments, for example calling van Rheede a "haughty nobleman aristocrat:" or Nicolaes Welter an "unimaginative bureaucrat" (18). But he is nevertheless knowledgeable about the documents

and the history they represent. These pages offer valuable insights into VOC soldier life, local gift exchange customs, material culture, political relations and a myriad of other topics.

The translation reads fluidly in English, which, as those who work with seventeenth-century Dutch know, is not an easy task. It would have been nice if the documents had been better linked to the essay rather than cited as archive numbers, but this is not an insurmountable obstacle. In addition to the detailed annotation, Vink has provided a glossary of specialised terms that can not found in regular dictionaries and will be useful to anyone working with early modern VOC documents relating to this region or the products produced there.

It is unfortunate for scholars that primary source collections have become rare, but fortunate that the series editors and Markus Vink have presented us with this interesting collection.

doi:10.1017/S0165115313000144 Martha Chaiklin, *University of Pittsburgh*

LATIN AMERICA

Inga Luther, Nina Elsemann, Franka Bindernagel, & Stefan Rinke, eds. *Erinnerung schreibt Geschichte. Lateinamerika und Europa im Kontext transnationaler Verflechtungen.* Stuttgart: Verlag Hans-Dieter Heinz, 2011. 278 pp. €29.50.

Erinnerung schreibt Geschichte is a welcome addition to the exciting new field of politics of memory in Latin America. Taking the 200-year anniversary of Latin America's independence as departure point, most of the ten essays in the collection examine how debates over history and memory in post-totalitarian regimes have begun to question and revise dominant constructs of history over the past few decades. While the essays do not generally revise the theoretical framework in which the concepts of "memory" and "history" or ultimately "nationalism" are currently discussed in Latin American history, they clearly add to the discussions by providing scholars with well-researched new case studies of struggles for political, social, and ethnic inclusion in dominant constructs of the nations in Argentina, Chile, Guatemala, and Spain from the early twentieth century to the present. The volume will be particularly useful in the classroom context when teaching lower and upper-level students about totalitarianism, social marginalisation, and constructs of nationalisms, but also when teaching history as a social construct.

The collection is divided into two parts that investigate the highly politicised nature of constructing national master narratives from distinct angles. Section I focuses on global developments that influence changes in perceptions of memory and lead to alterations in the discourse of national history while Section II focuses on domestic factors that lead to a diversification of actors involved in constructing national history.

Section I consists of two theoretical articles and two case studies that place politics of history and memory in a global or transnational context. Berthold Molden gives an overview of the state of affairs within the new field of "politics of global history" by tracing the epistemology of the main concepts and alerting to the role of the media in spreading selected pieces of history and creating a transnational, global memory. Ralph Buchenhorst's article shows how terminology first defined for studies about the Shoa can be usefully transferred and applied in post-totalitarian contexts like Argentina where the highly politicised nature of national memory requires a constant distinction between the different perspectives of actors. Franka Bindernagel uses the interesting example of German immigrants to Buenos Aires in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century to illustrate how transnational dimensions affected the German community's struggle for a new identity that would allow them to become part of Argentina's master narrative. Nina Elsemann's well-researched article deals with the highly contested memory, representations, and discourse of the atrocities committed during the Franco era in Spain and illustrates the complex political struggles between